

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed August 13, 2004. At the time of the Office Action, Claims 1-9, 13-19 and 25-31 were pending in this application. Claims 25-31 were withdrawn from consideration. Claim 9 was objected to, and claims 1-8 and 13-19 were rejected.

Objection to the Title

The title has been amended to more clearly indicate the invention to which the claims are directed.

Rejections of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1-3, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nakamura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,433,848.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sato et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,461,501.

Claims 1-3, 13, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kubo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,195,140.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 13 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Noritake, U.S. Patent No. 6,563,559.

Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,433,848.

Claims 4-6, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,461,501.

Claims 4-6, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kubo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,195,140.

Claims 4-6, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noritake, U.S. Patent No. 6,563,559.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include all limitations of dependent claims 2 and 8, and allowable claim 9. Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1 is now allowable.

Claims 3-7 dependent from independent claim 1 and contain all limitations thereof. Thus claims 3-7 are allowable.

Claims 2, 8, 9 and 13-19 have been canceled.

Objection to Claim 9

Claim 9 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 9 has been canceled and the limitations of claims 2, 8 and 9 have been incorporated into independent claim 1.

All amendments are made in a good faith effort to advance the prosecution on the merits. Applicant reserves the right to subsequently take up prosecution on the claims as originally filed in this or appropriate continuation, continuation-in-part and/or divisional applications.

Applicant respectfully submits that no amendments have been made to the pending claims for the purpose of overcoming any prior art rejections that would restrict the literal scope of the claims or equivalents thereof.

Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments submitted herein be entered, and further request reconsideration in light of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all objections and rejections, and that there be an early notice of allowance.

SUMMARY

In light of the above amendments and remarks Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and early notice of the same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone or facsimile.

Applicant believes that there are no fees due in association with the filing of this Response. However, should the Commissioner deem that any fees are due, including any fees for extensions of time, Applicants respectfully request that the Commissioner accept this as a Petition Therefor, and direct that any and all fees due are charged to Baker Botts L.L.P. **Deposit Account No. 02-0383, (formerly Baker & Botts, L.L.P.) Order Number 075115.0329.**

Respectfully submitted,
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